

John F. Kennedy is born

1917 | Grade 4 · Explain with evidence

Words to know

leader — a person who guides or represents others

represent — speak or act for others

record — information kept so people can use it later

Look closely



John F. Kennedy

Read the story

John F. Kennedy was born in Brookline in 1917. He later represented Massachusetts in Congress and became president. His birthplace is now a national historic site.

A birthplace helps locate one beginning, not a person's complete life. Compare family history, education, political decisions, and public records when investigating a president.

Think, talk, and show evidence

1. State the main idea. Support it with two details from the reading.
2. Explain a change or challenge described in the text. Which words support your answer?
3. Use one vocabulary word in a new sentence about this event.
4. What can the image and caption help explain? What can they not tell you?

Follow-up reading: The Great Molasses Flood

1919

A large storage tank broke in Boston's North End. Molasses rushed through nearby streets. Twenty-one people died. The disaster harmed workers and neighbors and raised questions about industrial safety.

The January 15 disaster involved engineering, business responsibility, and regulation. Its unusual substance should not turn human loss into a joke. Examine records of the tank and the people affected.

Compare the two readings. Explain one similarity or difference using a detail from each. Their order does not prove that one caused the other.

Teacher guide & source trail

Original classroom adaptation. Suggested reading levels are instructional choices, not standardized readability certifications. Use professional judgment and learner feedback.

ELA practice: RI.4.1: refer to details; RI.4.2: main idea and summary; RI.4.3: explain events; RI.4.7: interpret visual information; W.4.2 and SL.4.1: explain and discuss.

These tasks support selected skills in the [Massachusetts 2017 ELA framework](#); they do not establish mastery of an entire standard.

Answer guidance

Factual anchor: John F. Kennedy was born in Brookline in 1917. He later represented Massachusetts in Congress and became president. His birthplace is now a national historic site. A birthplace helps locate one beginning, not a person's complete life. Compare family history, education, political decisions, and public records when investigating a president.

Accept accurate main ideas and explanations supported by the text. Vocabulary meanings are in the opening word bank. For picture questions, use the caption and credit below; distinguish what is visible from what is inferred. For comparison, accept a specific connection supported by both readings. Do not require personal accounts of trauma.

Continue the inquiry

[Research source for this event ↗](#)

[Research source for follow-up ↗](#)

[Event page, accessible HTML reading, and vocabulary game ↗](#)

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The PDF contains selectable English text and embedded fonts. For adjustable text and browser reading tools, use the event's [HTML page](#). External sources may need adult guidance.